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FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3233
INFO RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHWN/AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN PRIORITY 1842
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 0516
RUEHGE/AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN PRIORITY 0798
RUEHKG/AMEMBASSY KINGSTON PRIORITY 2496
RUEHPO/AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO PRIORITY 0940
RUEHPU/AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE PRIORITY 4074
RUEHSP/AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN PRIORITY 1596
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHC/DEPT OF LABOR WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY 1442
RUCOWCV/CUSTOMS CARIBBEAN ATTACHE MIAMI FL PRIORITY
RUEAHL/CHS WASHDC PRIORITY
RUMISTA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY

UNCLAS SANTO DOMINGO 000225

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STATE FOR WHA, WHA/CAR, WHA/EPSC, INR/IAA; USSOUTHCOM ALSO
FOR POLAD; TREASURY FOR OASIA-J LEVINE;
USDOC FOR 4322/ITA/MAC/WH/CARIBBEAN BASIN DIVISION;
USDOC FOR 3134/ITA/USFCS/RD/WH; DHS FOR CIS-CARLOS ITURREGUI

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SUBJECT: DOMINICAN POLITICS II #15: THE EMERGING "PINK"
ALLIANCE

1. (U) This is the 15th cable in a series reporting on the
second year of the administration of Dominican president
Leonel Fernandez.

Dominican Politics II #15:
The Emerging &Pink8 Alliance

(U) Since October, the main opposition PRD has been
negotiating with the third-ranked PRSC or "reformista" party
to form an alliance for the May 16 elections. The press has
taken to calling this risky venture the &pink8 alliance,
since the PRD color is white and the Reformista color is red.
The negotiations have focused on selecting common candidates
for each position to be decided in the elections) each
house in the Senate and the House of Representatives, each
mayoral office, and all 900 city council representatives
(regidores). By late November, the two party secretaries
general) Orlando Jorge Mera (PRD) and Vctor Gmez Casanova
) announced that the alliance had been agreed, subject only
to negotiation of a few details.

(U) The &details8 were in fact the toughest issues to
resolve) candidacies in at most 10 provinces and
municipalities where one party or the other thought it had a
sure winner and was unwilling to yield to one from the other
party. Since the new year it has become obvious that the
negotiations were deadlocked, despite repeated optimistic
statements to the press by Jorge Mera and Gmez Casanova,
accompanied by photos of the two young men smiling and
shaking hands.

(U) The strongest resistance has come from the PRSC. With
far fewer incumbents than the PRD in Congress and in the
municipalities, the Reformistas are unwilling to give up the
few winners in hand. PRSC President &Quique8 Antn Batlle

has been openly skeptical that the alliance will work, but PRD President Ramn Alburquerque continues to make supportive statements.

(U) Many commentators have pointed out the unprecedented nature of this proposed alliance between parties that have been arch-adversaries for more than 40 years. The only other national alliance in recent memory was the PRSC-PLD alliance in 1996, concluded at the last minute by then-President Balaguer for the purpose of preventing PRD caudillo Pea Gmez from winning election as his successor. Skeptics argue that even if the parties agree on the alliance, they will be unable to induce party members in some jurisdictions to follow instructions and vote for candidates of another party.

(SBU) PRD Secretary General Jorge Mera confirmed to us on January 18 that some mid-level leaders in each party oppose the pact. He acknowledged that about 20 percent of PRD officials leaders are against it. Despite that, Jorge Mera and Gmez Casanova have now reached what they believe is an acceptable accord, ad ref. PRD incumbent mayor Fernando Pea of the large municipality of Santo Domingo West told the political officer separately that he supports the pact and believes his PRD constituents will also do so, including voting for the alliance,s prospective senatorial candidate from Santo Domingo Province, senior PRSC figure Vctor Gmez Bergs (who is the father of PRSC Secretary General Gmez Casanova).

(U) The PRD Presidium was scheduled to take up the question of an alliance at a January 18 meeting, and the PRSC has convoked a large Assembly of the party,s national bodies on January 29 for the same purpose. Rumors of unresolved local candidacies continue to circulate. To qualify for the May 16 election, parties must notify any alliance to the Central Election Board by March 7.

(U) If approved, the alliance will back a common candidate for every post up for election: 32 senators, 178 deputies, 151 mayors, and some 900 city council members nationwide. The candidates will be drawn from both parties and probably a few from minor parties allied with the two major ones. There will be one joint slate of candidates and one ballot.

(SBU) Jorge emphasized to us that the alliance will not be about just divvying up electoral opportunities. Negotiators intend to forge a common &national agenda& or action plan. Prominent economist Miguel Ceara Hatton, currently affiliated with the UN Development Program here, is drafting this platform. Ceara Hatton was one of the authors of the hard-hitting 2005 UNDP Human Development Report.

(SBU) Jorge says the parties see the alliance as not just for this year, but potentially for the 2008 presidential election, as well. When asked, Jorge expressed doubt that such a candidate would come from the current top echelon of either party. He said that an alliance in 2008 would launch &a new historical cycle&.

12. (U) Drafted by Bainbridge Cowell.

13. (U) This piece and others in our series can be consulted at our SIPRNET web site (<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/wha/santodomingo>) along with extensive other material.
HERTELL